



# SKILL DEVELOPMENT: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS IN NORTH-EAST INDIA

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## ABSTRACT

Skills development is the process of identifying or knowing gaps of individual skill and developing and sharpens these skills for the benefits of individuals in particular and society as a whole. It is important because skills determine individuals' ability to execute plans with success.

India is a country with the population as the second largest in the world and this is still in its developing stage. As the country's economic environment is changing rapidly with entry of various global industries, it calls for skilled workforce. In today's competitive and fast-growing economic environment, engagement of workforce requires acquiring special set of skills.

Unemployment is also a great problem which is faced by the North eastern part of the country in particular and India as a whole. In order to make the unemployed population skilled, the Governments has launched various skill development programs through Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, such as Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), Craftsmen Training Scheme (CTS), Advanced Vocational Training Scheme (AVTS) etc. but still we are having shortage of skill personnel. The objective of this paper is to find out the problems and prospects of skill development in North-East India.

**KEYWORDS:** Skill Development, Knowledge, Workforce, Fast-growing, Prospect,

## INTRODUCTION

India is a country with the population as the second largest in the world. And this is still in its developing stage. As the country's economic environment is changing rapidly with entry of various global industries, it calls for skilled workforce. In today's competitive and fast-growing economic environment, engagement of workforce requires acquiring special set of skills.

Unemployment is also a great problem which is faced by the country, in order to make the unemployed youth skilled, the country has launched various skill development programs through Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship. Such as Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), Craftsmen Training Scheme (CTS), Advanced Vocational Training Scheme (AVTS) etc.

The North Eastern States of India also have some specific skill development programs based on their natural resources, industry and native communities. These targeted Skill Development programs helps the native population to acquire the special set of skills which are required to get a job or stable earning. And for this special Skill Development Societies and Bodies are formed for implementation and monitoring.

There is a great advantage to the North Eastern people to acquire some set of skills as the land is rich with various natural resources and also some unique industries which are exclusive to North-east. North-east is the home of Limestone mining, Silk production, Bronze utensil production and many more. People in these fields are in need of great workforce and skilled worker.

The North Eastern states have major communication problems. Which are mainly because the majority land distribution is on the hilly side. And the people living there has very hard time reaching the mainland. But as the internet connectivity and roadways communication is getting better day by day, they also have the chance to acquire skills by knowing about and participating in various skill development programs, which will eventually help them to get employed.

## OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

This Research focuses on finding about the detailed Prospects and Problems faced by the people in North-East India in Skill Development. The Research tries to understand how the Various skill development projects have helped the population so far and how they are providing the services to the people of North-East. As North East is somehow away from the national attention, how the skill development programs are assisting to the people of North East is a matter of Study.

Objectives of the study summarized as

1. To know about Skill Development Programme adopted by Government and Non- Government organizations etc.
2. To find out the Prospects/Needs for Skill Development Programme
3. To find out the problems for Skill Development Programme for NE India

## IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

Government of India has been providing various initiatives for development of skill among the youths. Accordingly, it is important to know whether these initiatives have any impact in development of the skill. This study will help to shed light in the matter of people engaging in various skill development programs and how they are getting benefitted from this in their lives.

## METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The study has been done by adoption of Qualitative method to analyze the objectives. This topic calls for study of derived set of data, as all the skill development projects in the North East and their implementation are provided to public with the help of various websites and advertisement which could be considered as raw set of data. This study will be based on secondary data but researcher will try to ornamented this study with primary data and information whenever possible.

## AREA OF THE STUDY

Researcher is tried to cover all the stats of NE region for this study. However, most of the data and information is based on Skill Development Programme of Assam. As the people of North-East India are away from national attention, it is important to research about the skill development projects and schemes which are ongoing or running in North-East India.

## Prospects of skill development programs is NE region India

India is witnessing a rapid change in its Economical-Environment especially after the pandemic. The Job market is not the same as always, many jobs have shifted from physical and offline mode to virtual or online mode. In these times various employers have provided various skilled workers the option to WFH (Work from Home) which is impossible before the pandemic.

Every Job needs some kind of skill to be accomplished properly. And a skilled worker can do a job more efficiently and effectively than a worker who does not have the skill for the particular job.

The North East region of India is very different in comparison to the Central India, as the NE region is rich with natural resources the skill required to make a living or acquiring a job is very different from other parts of the country.

- Sericulture in Assam has history dating back to thousands of years. Because the climate is very much suitable for rearing and cultivating silkworms, and there are people who are doing it for generations. The popularity of Muga Silk production Industry have grown tremendously over the past two decades in National and International level and the State Assam has monopoly in this Industry. People with good skill and hard work can earn well in this field, But the industry has seen decline in skilled workers throughout the decade.
- There are various Tribes living in the North East Region of India and they are very much hard working. Many of them lives in remote places and they have to take great effort to reach main land. If those peoples are equipped with good skills, then they can make living very easily as they are very much willing to work hard. Various NGOs and Govt skill development programs and societies have been designed to help these peoples. For example, Meghalaya State Skill Development Society, DDU-GKY etc. The North East India states have many skill development societies in most of the states which provides vocational trainings, skill development workshops etc.
- In Assam, an autonomous Govt body was formed which was given the name of Employment Generation Mission (EGM), Their main goal is to train the unemployed youth through Project Implementation Agencies (PIAs) according to their needs.

- In Meghalaya, under DDU-GKY the Government have taken the initiative to train the rural youth with various skill enhancing trainings so they can earn a decent wage.
- In Sikkim, the Government has opened some livelihood schools which are basically schools for vocational training and which will also provide them the skills to earn a good living. These schools train people in Travel and Tourism, Hospitality and Management, Driver and Guide, Horticulture, Organic Farming, Veterinary Trainings etc. As Sikkim is place which attracts large numbers of tourists throughout the year this is very helpful for the youth of that state.
- The demand for skilled programs and trainings are driven by MSDE (Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship), it controls the requirements given by Centre and State for various skill development programs and projects. MSDE operates within the country with the help of various wings, such as Directorate General of Training (DGT), National Skill Development Fund (NSDF), National Council for Vocational Education and training (NCVET), National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), National Skill Development Fund (NSDF) and multiple number of Sector Skill Councils and National Skill Training Institutions.
- The DGT is the Apex body which provides vocational trainings and across the country. The DGT also runs various schemes related to Craftsmen Training, Training of various Trainers etc. One of the Schemes run by DGT is related to the creation and improvement of existing infrastructure in ITIs which focuses exclusively on North East region of the country.
- Many NGOs has also elongated their helping hands to the nation for skill development activities and there are many NGOs in the North East India region who are working hard for the development of the native peoples. For example, an NGO named 'Atma-Nirbhar- Ek challenge' which is formed in Assam has taken the oath to make a steady minimum income for Differently abled persons with various skilled development trainings which are personalized to every other differently abled person.

The Government of India has seen that a great effort is need to be taken in order to improve the current scenario of the youths of North-eastern region. And for that the Government has decided to fund cent percent to the development projects running in the North -eastern states, which was earlier in the ratio of 90:10.

The North-Eastern states have unique requirements and the skill development training in this region differs from the skill development trainings in the rest of India. The most of the skill development programs are inspired by national initiatives. Apart from various regional skill development schemes various national skill development programs are also proven to be very much popular and effective. There are approximately 73 ITIs with seating capacity of 17000 of which around 13000 caters to the technology based skill development trainings such as electrician, auto-mechanics etc.

In that view the "Enhancing Skill Development in NE and Sikkim" scheme which we also know as ESDI scheme, was formulated in 2011 to enhance the existing infrastructure of skill development in the North- Eastern states of India. As of now, with the help of this scheme the Central Government has helped the states in the following :-

- Upgradation of 22 existing it is in the 8 states of North East India
- Upgradation of Infrastructural drawbacks in the existing ITIs in the North-East India region. This includes constructing new hostel, boundary wall and upgradation of tools which are being used in the trainings.
- Funding and monitoring various cells at Central and state level. And most importantly
- Establishment of 34 new ITIs in the North-Eastern States.

State	ITIs covered under Up - Gradation		ITIs covered for funding deficient infrastructure		ITIs covered under new establishments	
	Numbers	Location	Numbers	Location	Numbers	Location
Meghalaya	4	Sohra, Resubelpara, Nongstoin, Nongpoh	4	Sohra, Resubelpara, Nongstoin, Nongpoh	3	Ampati, Mawkyrwat, East-Jayantia Hills
Manipur	3	Phaknung, Senapati, Takyel (w)	8	Phknung, Senapati, Takyel(W), Tamenlong, Ningthoukhong, Kakching, Chandel, Saikot	4	Sekmai, Kangpokpi, Pherzawl, Noney
Assam	6	Jorhat, Srikona, Majuli, Guwahati, Nagaon, Silchar(W)	1	Lakhimpur	5	Nalbari, Bongaigaon, Jorhat, Tinsukia, Sonitpur
Tripura	1	Indra Nagar	1	Belonia	3	Gandacharra, Santirbazar
Arunachal Pradesh	3	Yupia, Balinong, Dirang	3	Dirang, Roing, Tabarijo	9	New Sagalee, Manipoliang, Mipang, Kanubari, Tawang, East kameng, West Siang, Namsai
Nagaland	2	Dimapur, Kohima	5	Zuhenboto, Tuensung, Mon, Mokokchung, Kohima	4	Dimapur, Paren, Longleng, Kiphire
Sikkim	0		3	Rangpo, Namchi, Gyashiling	3	Kewzing, Sokeythang, West Sikkim
Mizoram	3	Aizawl, Lunglei, Saiha	3	Aizawl, Lunglei, Saiha	3	Champhai, Serchhip, Kolasib
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>		<b>28</b>		<b>34</b>	

Source: Economy & Policy Wing, Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, Govt. of India.

**Table 1.1: District wise coverage of the scheme**

These schemes have made lot of progress since it's inception. The progress can be understood with the help of the following table:-

Serial Number	Component	Completed	Under Progress	Yet to start	Not covered	Total
1	<b>Construction of new ITIs</b>					
1.a	Civil works	3	15	16		34
1.b	Procurement of Tools & Equipment	0	07	27		34
2	<b>Up-gradation of 34 ITIs</b>					
2.a	Construction of classroom & workshop	14	6	2		22
2.b	Purchase of Tools	16	04	2		22
3	<b>Supplementing Infrastructure Deficiencies in 28 ITIs</b>					
3.a	Construction of Hotel	20	01	06	01	28
3.b	Construction of Boundary wall	20	01	06	01	28
3.c	Purchase of Tools	19	04	00	05	28

Source: Economy & Policy Wing, Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, Government of India

**Table 1.2: The progress made under the scheme since its inception**

#### MECHANISM OF IMPLEMENTATION

The schemes are generally implemented and monitored by Directorate General

of training (DGT) under the guidance of MSDE in the North-eastern states of India. Generally, these schemes are being implemented through State Directorate for Skill Development in all the North-Eastern States of the country. The regular third-party evaluation and monitoring is done by NILERD to correct the measures of implemented schemes, if any.

#### Role of NILERD

1. To develop the methodology by which the study will be done.
2. To develop various data collection tools and instruments.
3. To conduct various pilot survey to pre-test the tools and also finalize the tools to be used.
4. To conduct field visits for interviews and discussion with stakeholders as and when needed.
5. To get data analysis done.
6. To prepare and submit the final reports.

#### Problems of Skill Development in NE region

The Covid-19 pandemics have taken a great toll on the global population as a whole and many people have lost their jobs during that time. Despite of various skill development programs available to the youth they cannot fully take the benefit of it because of various reasons.

- The most common problem is the geolocation, as the North East India region is rich with hilly areas and there are various tribes who lives in those remote places. Despite of having various natural resources they struggle to get any information about various skills and training due to lack of network connectivity, bad roadway connectivity etc. These peoples are very hardworking but the knowledge and information about the various Skill Development initiatives taken by the governments and NGOs does not reach them most of the time. And this is a major setback for the Skill development initiative taken by the various Public and Private organizations.
- In North East India it can be seen that many skill-training centers and institutes have closed down or have discontinued some skill development programs due to lack of funds, lack of proper infrastructure or lack of trainees. People living in the remote areas have little to no access to the skill development initiatives which are taken by the Government and for that reason the skill-training centers does not attracts the number of trainees it deserves. After not enrolling large numbers of trainees into the skill development centers, the center struggles to get adequate funding to run the institution smoothly. And as a result most of the training centers gets closed over time.
- India is in the developing stages of Economy, and new industries and corporations are slowly entering into the Indian Markets. In this case the new industries require a lot of trained and skilled workers but these industries are mostly concentrated in the North-Central India. And North-East region does not have that many Industries to recruit skilled and trained workers. So, the lack of Industry and Corporation to recruit the skillful worker is also a great problem.
- Another major problem is that the youths does not gets a job according to their skill training. As the skill development trainings are mostly designed according to the youths of Central -India, the youths of North-Eastern region cannot get a job most of the time with the same skill. For example, the youths in Noida or Gurugram can easily get a job after a skill development training but the same cannot happen in North East region due to lack of industrialization.

#### Suggestions For Solving the Problems

In these days, the value of skilled workforce has grown tremendously. Skilled workforce are the pillars of a growing industry. In these times, so many industries are formed within the country and many of them are coming to the Indian Market from overseas as well. Various Public and Private sectors are working around the clock to train the youths so they can make a good living. The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship and Directorate has come a long way with its various skill development projects and training, and has helped the youth to find a job according to their skills. So, there are some points which could be taken into consideration as suggestion for solving the problem.

- The MSDE with the help of DGT can make some customized training and skill development programs according to the youths of North-Eastern youths. For example, training the youths of Assam in sericulture, training the youths of Nagaland in bamboo furniture works etc.
- The training institutes can improve their infrastructure so that the youths can train in the skill development programs more efficiently. Which will ultimately result in their employment.
- The technology in today's world is changing rapidly, and the skill development institutions have to pace up with the upcoming technologies. And should integrate the technologies into the skill development trainings, which will keep the trainees up to date with the current industrial needs.
- The various ITIs throughout the North-East region should be upgraded and should be provided with great infrastructure and demanding training courses. This will ensure the trainees to get a job according to their skills.
- Lastly, the enrollment of the trainees should be maximized. There are many training institutions who are failing to provide skill develop-

ment trainings to the youths as there are few to none participants in the programs. And which ultimately leads to closure of the training center after some time. So, the aim of these centers should be to make an awareness to the youths nearby with the help of various campaign and posters.

#### CONCLUSION

In this highly competitive Job market, the value of a skilled worker is very high. And the person with highest skill and knowledge can earn a good amount of money in the respective field very easily. India is doing very well in the Global economy during the past decade, with various made in India start-ups and also the involvement of global industries. And a skilled workforce is very important for all over development of the Indian Economy as a whole. In this research the Prospects and Problems of Skill development can be understood in a better way. Therefore from the above discussion and analysis it can be concluded that North-East region is full of rich potential. There are so many hard-working people but most of them are not trained, not skilled. But now a days with various government projects and schemes people are engaging more and more in these programs. MSDE of India has played great role in developing the skills of the individual. There are also many drawbacks which are mostly because of the geographical distribution. But overall, the scenario is changing day by day and we must stay hopeful that in the near future the native people will be skilled and trained enough to get a good earning in North East India region.

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